

ABDICATION and EXILE

The End of Napoleon's Reign

Social Studies 9



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When Napoleon lost his battles in Spain and Russia, he returned back to Paris. Once there, he felt he had disappointed his people and he **ABDICATED** the throne.

ABDICATE =

He was then **EXILED** to the small **Island of Elba** off the coast of Corsica. Napoleon was a prisoner on this small island who could only have 1000 men under him and he was in charge of the island's economy. Back in France, they had found a living relative of King Louis XVI, he was **LOUIS XVIII** and was put back in power in France. He started to change back all the laws that Napoleon had introduced and the people truly hated Louis XVIII.

Having heard the stories, Napoleon decided to attempt an escape and return to Paris and try to take power again. When his British captor was away on business, Napoleon and his 1000 men commissioned some boats and sailed back to Paris. Louis XVIII had heard of Napoleon's return and sent the royal guards to get him. BUT...the royal guards had been in Napoleon's army before and instead of capturing him, they joined Napoleon and walked back to Paris. Louis XVIII fled in the middle of the night and when Napoleon arrived in Paris, he was treated like a hero. The people welcomed him back with open arms.

Other European leaders were still nervous of Napoleon and did not trust him. Napoleon tried to make peace with his neighbouring countries, but it did not work. The British, the Prussians (Germans) decided to stop Napoleon once and for all. They were going to attack. Napoleon heard this plan and prepared his army first. Napoleon had 110,000 men, the British had 100,000, and the Prussians had 110,000. The French were outnumbered by double. Napoleon was still determined to win and he advanced into Belgium for war. The British and the Prussians were still pretty far apart and had not met yet. Napoleon decided to attack the Prussians first, and then circle north and attack the British in two battles.

The attack on the Prussians was a success and Napoleon began 'hunting down' the British. BUT.....weather was not on his side. A major rain storm hit and turned the roads to mud. Napoleon would not reach the British that day....

The next day when the rain had stopped, Napoleon continued towards the British in a small town called **WATERLOO**. BUT....he did not know that over night, the Prussians and re-grouped and joined the British. Napoleon was now greatly out-numbered. And the leader of the British Army – **The Duke of Wellington**, outplayed Napoleon. He had studied Napoleon's military moves and knew exactly what Napoleon would do next in battle. Napoleon's troops lost and he retreated back to Paris.

Once again, Napoleon was captured and forced to live in exile again. Napoleon wanted to be exiled in England, but the English king was too scared of him. Instead, a British ship took Napoleon to the **island of Saint Helena**, far away in the South Atlantic, where he remained a prisoner until his death in 1821.

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING PAGES AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS BELOW: (p. 118-120)

1. Why did Napoleon return to Paris after being exiled to the island of Elba? Explain in full sentences.
2. What happened to Napoleon after he lost the Battle of Waterloo? Do you think he was fairly treated? Why or why not? Explain and give evidence.
3. The British Commander, the Duke of Wellington, once said that he would never attempt to write an account of the battle which he won against Napoleon at Waterloo. Why do you think he felt this way?
4. Where was Napoleon exiled for the second time?
5. Why do you think that European Kings and other leaders were scared of Napoleon? Explain.